1. (Amended) A nestable crate for bottles, said crate comprising:

a floor portion having a floor top surface and a floor bottom surface, the floor top surface including a plurality of bottle support areas for supporting bottles; and

a low-depth wall structure connected to the floor portion and forming a containment area therewith, the wall structure having a peripherally extending upper band portion having an interior surface with bottle contact portions and an exterior surface, the low-depth wall structure further having a single-walled lower wall construction comprising adjacent column members which extend between the upper band portion the and floor portion, the wall structure including sidewalls and end walls, and adjacent column members having facing surfaces extending inwardly into the containment area, wherein at least one of the sidewalls and end walls includes a handle opening extending therethrough defined by an upper handle member and a lower handle member, with at least one column member from the lower handle member to the floor portion,

wherein the bottle contact portions, bottle support areas, and the facing surfaces define a plurality of bottle receiving pockets extending around the periphery of the wall structure for maintaining bottles in a vertically upright manner.

2. (Amended) The crate of claim 1, wherein interior surface of the upper band portion includes a plurality of nesting members aligned with corresponding column members, such that an outer surface of the column members are configured to receive the nesting members of a like crate when in a nesting orientation.

8. (Amended) A low-depth nestable crate for holding bottles, said crate having a low-depth wall structure having sidewalls and end walls, said crate comprising:

a floor member having a floor top surface and a floor bottom surface;

a band extending around the periphery of the crate and spaced above the floor member for preventing the bottles from tipping, the band further having spaced-apart interior projections, the inner surface of which defines a first plane; and

a plurality of columns disposed along the sidewalls and end walls for connecting the band and the floor member, the columns being spaced apart and having a nesting window disposed therebetween, the columns having an interior surface and an exterior surface, the columns projecting offset inwardly from the band such that adjacent pair of columns define a bottle receiving area for containing one of the bottles therein, the interior surface of each column having

a pair of opposed surfaces meeting at a centrally disposed surface which defines a second plane offset from the first plane, the exterior surface of the column having a recess to matingly receive corresponding projections from a similar crate nested therebelow.

12. (Amended) The crate of claim 11, wherein the interior surfaces of the columns have a cylindrically concave surface, and wherein the cylindrically concave surface and its adjacent upright concave inner surface have a similar curvature radius.

17. (Amended) A low-depth nestable bottle crate comprising:

a floor member having a top surface and a bottom surface, the top surface having a plurality of bottle support areas for supporting an array of bottles in an upright manner;

a generally upright band member spaced apart from the floor member and extending around the periphery of the crate, the band member having an upper surface, a lower surface, an exterior surface, and an interior surface, the interior surface having a single walled bottle contact area corresponding to the bottle support areas of the floor member, the interior surface further having upper inwardly-extending portions between adjacent contact areas; and

a plurality of spaced-apart nesting columns connecting a periphery of the floor member with the lower surface of the band member, the columns including first and second opposed inner surfaces defining a corresponding vertical recess on the column outer surface, wherein the first inner surface of one of the plurality of columns, an adjacent second inner surface from an adjacent column, one of the bottle support areas and bottle contact areas define a bottle receiving pocket for supporting a bottle in an upright orientation, wherein the upper inwardly-extending portions and the columns have a transition ledge therebetween.

21. (Amended) The crate of claim 17 wherein the band member includes side wall portions and end wall portions, and wherein the end wall portions of the band member include a handle opening formed therein.

22. (Amended) The crate of claim 17 wherein the bottle support area oriented at a corner of the floor member is configured such that more than half of the bottle circumference is contained within the bottle support area.

23. (Amended) A low-depth nestable bottle crate comprising:

a floor member having a top surface with a plurality of bottle support areas for supporting an array of bottles thereon;

an upper wall member spaced apart from the floor member and extending around the periphery of the crate, the upper wall member having an exterior surface, and also having an interior surface with spaced apart inwardly extending projection members, and bottle contact surfaces between the projection members; and

a lower wall portion disposed along a plane offset inwardly from the projection members and having a plurality of support members for connecting a periphery of the floor member with a lower surface of the upper wall member, the support members aligned with the a nesting projection of the upper wall member, the support members including first and second opposed inner surfaces defining a corresponding recess on the column outer surface for receiving the nesting projection of a like crate when nested, the lower wall structure having a window disposed between adjacent support members.

24. (Amended) A nestable bottle crate comprising:

a floor member having a top surface with a plurality of bottle support areas for supporting an array of bottles thereon;

an upper wall member spaced apart from the floor member and extending around the periphery of the crate, the upper wall member having an upper edge, a lower edge, an exterior surface, and also having an interior surface with spaced apart inwardly extending nesting projections, and concave bottle contact surfaces between the nesting projections; and

a lower wall structure inwardly offset from the upper wall member and having a plurality of support members for connecting the floor member with a lower surface of the upper wall member, the support members vertically aligned with the nesting projections of the upper wall member, the support members including first and second opposed concave inner surfaces defining a corresponding recess on the column outer surface for receiving the nesting projection of a like crate when nested, the lower wall structure having a window disposed between adjacent support members.

25. (Amended) A nestable crate assembly comprising:

(a) a first bottle crate comprising:

a floor having a top surface with a plurality of bottle support areas for supporting an array of bottles thereon;

an upper wall member spaced apart from the floor and extending around the periphery of the crate, the upper wall member having an upper edge, a lower edge, an exterior surface, and also having an interior surface with spaced apart inwardly-extending portions, and bottle contact surfaces between the inwardly-extending portions; and

a lower wall structure inwardly offset from the upper wall member and having a plurality of support members for connecting a periphery of the floor with the upper wall member, the support members vertically aligned with the inwardly-extending portions of the upper wall member, the support members including first and second opposed inner surfaces defining a corresponding recess on the column outer surface for receiving inwardly-extending portions of a like crate when nested, the lower wall structure having a window disposed between adjacent support members; and

(b) a second bottle crate comprising:

a plurality of generally vertical sidewalls defining a wall structure having an upper surface, outer surface and inner surface;

a floor attached to the wall structure and defining a compartment therewith,

wherein when the first bottle crate is nested within the compartment of the second bottle crate, the lower wall structure of the first bottle crate is disposed within the compartment of the second bottle crate such that the lower edge of the upper wall member of the first bottle crate rests upon the upper surface of the sidewalls of the second bottle crate, and wherein the exterior surface of the upper wall member of the first bottle crate is generally co-planar with the outer surface of the wall structure of the second bottle crate.

New Claims:

26. (New) A low-depth nestable crate for holding bottles, said crate having a low-depth wall structure having sidewalls and end walls, said crate comprising:

a floor having a floor top surface and a floor bottom surface;

an upper wall portion extending around the periphery of the crate and spaced above the floor member, the upper wall portion having opposed sidewalls and opposed end walls, the sidewalls including a first upper wall portion and a second upper wall portion, the first upper wall portion having first inner surfaces and first outer surfaces spaced apart from each other, the first inner surface having interior projections extending inwardly into the crate, and the first outer surface being generally planar, the second upper wall portion being non-flat and having a second inner surface and a second outer surface, the second inner surface defining a bottle contact surface, the second outer surface recessed relative to the first outer surface; and

a plurality of columns disposed along the sidewalls and end walls for connecting the upper wall portion and the floor, the columns being spaced apart and having a nesting window disposed therebetween below the bottle contact surface, the columns having an interior surface and an exterior surface, the columns offset inwardly from the band such that adjacent pair of columns define a bottle receiving area for containing one of the bottles therein, the interior surface of each column having a pair of opposed surfaces meeting at a central surface, the exterior surface of the column having a recess to receive corresponding projections from a similar crate nested therebelow.

27. (New) A low-depth nestable crate for holding bottles, said crate having a low-depth wall structure having sidewalls and end walls, said crate comprising:

a floor having a floor top surface;

an upper wall portion extending around the periphery of the crate and spaced above the floor member, the upper wall portion having an inner surface and an outer surface, the outer surface defined by alternating first outer surface portions and second outer surface portions, the first outer surface portions defined by a generally flat planar surface and the second outer surface portions defined by recessed uneven surfaces, the inner surface having a plurality of spaced-apart interior projections corresponding to the first outer surface portions, and a corresponding uneven bottle contact surface corresponding to the second outer surface portions;

a plurality of columns disposed along a periphery of the floor for connecting the upper wall portion and the floor, the columns being spaced apart and having a nesting window disposed therebetween, the columns disposed generally below the interior projections, and the window disposed generally below the bottle contact surface, the columns having an exterior recessed surface for receiving a similar crate nested therebelow.

28. (New) A nestable crate for bottles comprising:

a floor;

a pair of opposed sidewalls and endwalls extending around the periphery of the crate and spaced above the floor member, the upper wall portion having an inner surface and an outer surface, the outer surface of the sidewalls defined by alternating first outer surface portions and second outer surface portions, the first outer surface portions defined by a generally flat planar surface and the second outer surface portions inwardly offset from the first outer surface portions, the outer surface of the endwalls being generally planar and flat thereacross, the inner surface of the sidewalls having a plurality of spaced-apart interior projections corresponding to the first outer surface portions;

a plurality of columns disposed along a periphery of the floor for connecting the upper wall portion and the floor, the columns being spaced apart and having a nesting window disposed therebetween, the columns disposed generally below the interior projections, and the window disposed generally below NAB the bottle contact surface, the columns having an exterior recessed surface for receiving a similar crate nested therebelow.

29. (New) The crate of claim 28, wherein the inner surface of the sidewalls further includes a bottle contact surface corresponding to the second outer surface portions.

30. (New) The crate of claim 28, wherein one of the pairs of sidewalls and endwalls includes a handle opening therein.

31. (New) A nestable crate comprising:

a floor;

an upper wall portion having extending around the periphery of the crate and spaced above the floor, the upper wall portion having an inner surface and an outer surface, the outer

surface having an upper edge and lower edge generally parallel with each other, the inner surface including spaced-apart interior projections and a bottle contact surface disposed between a pair of adjacent interior projections, the upper wall portion further having opposed upper side walls and opposed upper end walls, wherein at least one of the opposed upper side walls and end walls includes a handle area defined by a handle opening with an upper handle member first disposed thereabove and a lower handle member disposed therebelow;

a lower portion having a plurality of columns disposed along the sidewalls and end walls for connecting the upper wall portion and the floor, the columns being spaced apart and having a nesting window disposed therebetween below the bottle contact surface, the columns having an interior surface and an exterior surface, the columns extending inwardly from the interior projections of the upper wall portion and having a first later edge and a second lateral edge, wherein the first later edge of one column and the second lateral edge of an adjacent column define a window therebetween.

32. (New) The crate of claim 31, wherein the upper wall portion has an upper edge portion disposed above the upper handle member defined by a plurality of ribs.